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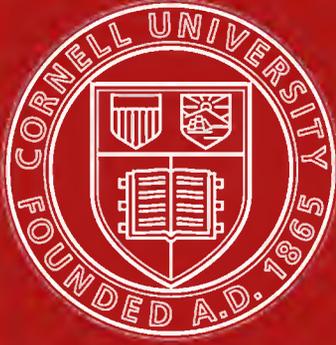
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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

FROM AN ORIGINAL PORTRAIT IN PENCIL BY BENJAMIN WEST.
IN THE COLLECTION OF THE HON. SAMUEL W. PENNYFACKER, L.L.D.

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FRANKLIN'S
ACCOUNT WITH THE
"LODGE OF MASONS"

1731—1737

AS FOUND UPON THE PAGES OF HIS

DAILY JOURNAL

READ BEFORE THE

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE

F. AND A. M.

OF PENNSYLVANIA

AT THE ANNUAL GRAND COMMUNICATION
HELD AT PHILADELPHIA,
DECEMBER 27, 1898

BY

BROTHER JULIUS FRIEDRICH SACHSE

COLUMBIA LODGE, No. 91

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FRANKLIN'S
ACCOUNT WITH THE
“LODGE OF MASONS”

1731—1737.



RIGHT WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER AND BRETHREN :

It will be recalled that one of the last important acts performed by the late Brother CLIFFORD P. MACCALLA during his incumbency as Right Worshipful Grand Master of Pennsylvania was the publication of several papers and documents, showing that Philadelphia was the “Mother city” of Freemasonry in America, and that the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania was the oldest upon the Western Continent.

The chief evidence used by Brother MACCALLA to establish these claims for Pennsylvania was based upon various notices and advertisements printed by Benjamin Franklin in his *Pennsylvania Gazette*, claims which were strengthened by the finding of the individual Ledger of St. John's Lodge, of Philadelphia, dating from June 24, 1731, to June 24, 1738, a book which, from the inscription upon the cover, is known as “Liber B.”

Then the subsequent discovery by the writer of the "Journal of the Lodge held at the Tun Tavern in Water Street" (Philadelphia), from June 28, 1749, to June 24, 1755, gave us an insight into the life of the third Subordinate Lodge in Pennsylvania. A copy of this interesting volume is in the library of the Grand Lodge.

Notwithstanding the convincing evidence presented by Brother MACCALLA, the claims made by him in the interest of Pennsylvania Masonry were hotly disputed by our sister Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

It is now my privilege to communicate to this Right Worshipful Body some additional evidence confirmatory of the position so ably taken by Brother MACCALLA. This new proof comes in the shape of original entries in the handwriting of BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, and is nothing less than his personal account with the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania from August, 1734, to August, 1737. It also shows that there was at least one Lodge within the Province outside of Philadelphia; this was at Lancaster. The account further offers a strong inference that our own Grand Lodge was not only the oldest and most important Masonic body in America, but that at that early day, as a matter of fact, the Lodges of both Massachusetts and Carolina were subordinate to the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania.

This new evidence was found in FRANKLIN'S daily commercial account-book and first ledger. This book, an ordinary blank-book bound in sheep, fifteen by six

inches in size, of the style in vogue during the early part of the last century, bears upon the fly-leaf the legend, "Benjⁿ Franklin['] Journal, began [*sic*] July 4, 1730."

*Benjⁿ Franklin[']
Journal, began
July 4. 1730*

INSCRIPTION ON FLY-LEAF OF FRANKLIN'S JOURNAL.

In the fore part of the book we have the daily entries, just as the young printer and shopkeeper made them from day to day. In the latter half of the book, which he paged and indexed and called "Ledger A," we have the individual accounts posted. The charges against the "Masons' Lodge" appear in both of these divisions.

This valuable tome, without attracting the special attention of any one, has reposed among a lot of Franklin papers and material for over a century in the archives of the American Philosophical Society at Philadelphia, of which FRANKLIN was the first president. Thus it remained until a few months ago, when the writer, while searching among the unclassi-

fied manuscript material of the Society, came across the old account-book. Recognizing at a glance its importance and value, he made a careful examination of its contents, with the result of finding, among other historical data, several entries of the greatest value to this Right Worshipful Grand Lodge in particular, and to Masonic students wherever found.

Here we have documentary evidence in the handwriting of BENJAMIN FRANKLIN which sheds much new light upon the days of our Masonic infancy in the Western Hemisphere.

The first entry to which I will call your attention is the earliest definite evidence, confirmatory of "Liber B," of the existence of an active Masonic body in Pennsylvania. It will be recollected that FRANKLIN, in his *Pennsylvania Gazette*, No. 108, of December 3 to 8, 1730 (whereof more hereafter), states that several Lodges of Freemasons have been erected within the Province,—a rather indefinite notice. In his list, however, of printing done as recorded under date of September 9, 1731, we find the following entry :

"Blanks for Masons 100

0 5 0"

Now, there can be no possible doubt that these "Blanks" were petitions for initiation and membership.

Eight months later, *Pennsylvania Gazette*, No. 187, June 19 to 26, 1732, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN records the meeting of the Grand Lodge at HUBBARD'S Sun Tavern in Water Street. It is this latter date which our friends

who differ with us usually fall back upon when the seniority of their organization is called into question.

The notice just read from the old account-book, however, positively fixes our date of active life prior to September, 1731.

Most important to us as Pennsylvania Freemasons are the entries found in both journal and "Ledger A," which give FRANKLIN'S account of his dealings with the "Lodge of Masons at B[rother] Hubards," the latter meaning the Sun Tavern* on Water Street a well-known hostelrie kept by Brother JOHN HUBBARD. I will also state that the official name of this "Lodge of Masons" was "The Grand Lodge of the Ancient and Honorable Society of FREE and ACCEPTED Masons."

Second only in interest are the entries throwing light upon FRANKLIN'S dealings with the Brethren, and the distribution of the "Book of Constitutions," reprinted by FRANKLIN by special order for the use of the Brethren in North America. FRANKLIN himself calls it the "Mason Book," which has the distinction of being the first Masonic publication issued in the Western world.

* There were two Masonic taverns on Water Street at that early day,—the Sun Tavern, kept by Brother JOHN HUBBARD, where the Grand Lodge and St. John's Lodge held their stated meetings, and the Tun Tavern, kept by Brother THOMAS MULLEN, where a Subordinate Lodge met until the Masons' Hall was dedicated in Lodge Alley in 1755.—J. F. S.

A heliographic fac-simile of this ledger account is here presented (page 9).

A careful analysis of the various entries and a comparison with the previously presented evidence throw considerable additional light upon much of our early Masonic history, which heretofore was more or less obscure; therefore this new contribution to our early history can hardly be over-estimated.

The first important entry in the ledger account under date of September, 1734, is a charge for one thousand tickets. This charge appears in both journal and ledger. These tickets were engraved notices, to be sent out for the Quarterly Communications. The price was four pounds three shillings and fourpence per thousand, or a trifle over two cents apiece. As this lot of tickets appears to have lasted until October, 1736, a fact shown by a subsequent charge, we have the inference that the "Grand Lodge of Masons" at that time was composed of about one hundred and twenty-five members. That there was an increase during the period is shown from the fact that the next order called for eleven hundred tickets, at a cost of four pounds eleven shillings and eightpence. A specimen of these old summonses is or should be in the collection of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, where it was seen and examined by the writer some years ago; a diligent search, however, failed to locate it for the present purpose.

Referring to my estimate of the aggregate member-

Work done since Sept^r 9. 1731.
when White went away

Sept 16	for Francis Buxby's Room	10	6
"	28 th for B ^r Queen of Fables	7	6
"	for Abraham Buxby	7	6
"	for Quif ^r Jackson	7	6
"	for Davis's Rent	7	6
"	Thanks for Thomas's	7	6
"	for Francis Buxby's	7	6
"	28 th for Collier and lead	7	6
"	28 th for Thomas's Laurence	7	6
"	Wig. Bate for Gen. Lumley's	7	6
"	28 th for B ^r Queen of Fables	7	6
"	28 th for Davis's Thomas of Morris	7	6

ship, I do not wish to be understood as assuming that there were one hundred and twenty-five regular members of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania at that time, as now constituted. Evidently the invitations to attend were sent out to all Masons who were actual members of the Lodges under the Jurisdiction of Pennsylvania, whether the Subordinate Lodges were in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Massachusetts, or the Carolinas.

Then, again, all Masons were not members. There was a distinction, which is explained by a reference to the journal of the Lodge which met at the Tun Tavern, wherein it will be seen that only a percentage of Brethren made Masons within the Lodge became actual members of the Lodge in which they were made. This was another matter, which required a separate ballot at some time subsequent to the raising of the candidate.

FRANKLIN'S "Mason Book" was set up and printed during the summer of 1734. It was a reprint of Anderson's Constitutions, originally published in London in the year 1723. A fac-simile of the title page appears on page 11.

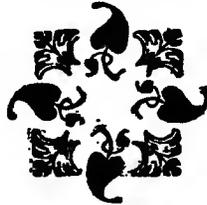
This "Mason Book" was ready for distribution, according to FRANKLIN'S journal, in August, 1734. The earliest entry referring to it to be found in our account-book charges the Grand Lodge with a "finely gilded Constitutions, to the Proprietor." This presentation copy must have been for either JOHN or RICHARD PENN, as THOMAS PENN, it appears from FRANK-

THE
CONSTITUTIONS
OF THE
FREE-MASONS.

CONTAINING THE

History, Charges, Regulations, &c.
of that most Ancient and Right
Worshipful FRATERNITY.

For the Use of the LODGES



LONDON Printed; Anno 5723.
Re-printed in *Philadelphia* by special Order, for the Use
of the Brethren in *NORTH-AMERICA.*
In the Year of Masonry 5734. Anno Domini 1734.

TITLE-PAGE OF FIRST MASONIC BOOK PRINTED IN AMERICA.

LIN's journal, bought and paid for his own copy. JOHN PENN is known to have been a Mason, and he was probably the recipient of this finely gilded copy.

Immediately below this charge is a similar one for the Lodge. Then, under date of August 31, 1734, follows a charge for three copies sent to Lancaster County by JOHN CATHERWOOD. Below this comes a single copy for MORGAN SEXTON, whose identity I have thus far failed to discover. The next entry is dated August 15, which FRANKLIN had evidently omitted in posting, and he so notes in the margin. We have,—

“ For 8 by Reynells to Lancaster	
For postage of Commission &c. $1\frac{1}{4}$, & $\frac{3}{4}$	14 0
For Constitutions sent to Boston 70, Carolina 25	£11 17 6”

There appears to have been a fatality connected with the charge of August 15, 1734. First, FRANKLIN omitted to post the account, and, as will be seen in the fac-simile, when he did finally post it, being cramped for space, he neglected to carry out the price of the eight copies sent to Lancaster by Brother REYNELLS, and that part of the account is presumably still open.

The two persons named in connection with the Mason Books sent to Lancaster were both well-known residents of Lancaster County. JOHN CATHERWOOD was a bachelor, and lived in Donegal township, where he died July 10, 1742. His property was bequeathed to JOHN and WILLIAM DAVENPORT, sons of JONAH DAVENPORT.

Isaac Brown Dr				
	For 1 Quire Post Paper		2	6
1736 June 11	For a gilt Mason Book & one unb ^d		7	6
Sept. 28	For a quire paper and quilt to		2	3
Oct. 2	For a quire paper & Bill Lading		2	
30	For Bill of Lading			6
Nov. 16	For Ink paper, and pencil		2	10
Dec. 1	For an Ink pot			6
1737 March 26	For a quire paper		1	6
May 22	For 1/2 quire post		1	3
July 8	For paper & a Dictionary		1	6
Sept.	For paper & a Receipt 2/6 - Jan ^y 26 th off ^r 1/3		1	6
	For 1/2 quire of Masons at 15/6		1	9
	For Tickets		2	15
	For Tickets 1000		5	
1738	For a finely gilt'd Constitution to the Proprietor		4	3
	For one D ^o for the Lodge			5
Aug 31	For 3 Constitutions by John Cartharwood Sec ^y 1738		7	6
omitted 15/	For 1 D ^o to Morgan Sec ^y		2	6
	For 6 by Reynolds to L ^o ncast			14
	For postage of Constitution to W ^o 2/8		11	17
	For Constitutions sent to Boston 70, Carolina 25			6
1731	John Fruin Dr		13	14
	For Cash		1	6
	For Adv ^t s			6
	For a Bottle of Ink			4
	For an Au ^t Book			7
				6
Mar. 16	For a Power of attorney		1	19
Octob. 9	For a Pair serv ^t Indenture			4
Nov 11	For a quire Paper			6
Dec. 9	For a Pocket Book			10
Mar 4	For 6 Bond ^s			6
	For a quire Paper			1

Fac-Simile of folio 66-67, Franklin's Ledger "A" in possession of the American Philosophical Society, showing his account with the "Lodge of Masons"

	Contra				
	For Cash in full			2	6
	For Cash			7	6
1777. May 3	For 1 piece Linnen			4	5
	Contra				
	For Cash in full			15	
Oct. 1736	Lodge D continued	Print over	13	11	10
	For 1100 Tickets		4	11	8
	For Advertisements		2	10	
1737. Aug 10	For Freight of Limes			3	
			18	16	6
	From D continued	Print up		7	6
1738	For binding a common Prayer			2	
Aug 29	For Books deliv'd David Murray		1	16	6
Sept 29	For 2 quire bound			1	
	For a pocket Book			3	
1736. Jan 2.	For 4 quire dem. bound. Lt. G.		1	6	
5.	For 4 quire dem. bound		1	6	
12	For 3 quire small paper bound.		1	11	6
Feb. 26.	For 2 quire paper			1	3
	For 2 quire paper			2	6
	For a pocket Book and a 7/8 quire book			2	
	For 2 quire paper			1	6
				6	6
				5	

Fac-Simile of folio 66-67, Franklin's Ledger "A" in possession of the American Philosophical Society, showing his account with the "Lodge of Masons"

Brother REYNELLS (John Reynolds) was appointed as a Justice for the "other side of the Susquehanna" by Governor Thomas, August 9, 1739. Many of his descendants, I am informed, are living at the present time.

The finding of the above trace of Masonry in Lancaster, so soon after the organization of the separate county, is of double interest, as it shows that the light of Freemasonry was disseminated in Pennsylvania, even to the outlying settlements, in the early days of our history.

Then, again, this reference tends to give additional color to the statement in the celebrated Cadwalader letter, wherein Dr. HENRY BELL, of Lancaster, claims to have been one of the originators of the first Masons' Lodge set up in Philadelphia in 1730.

Returning once again to our ledger account, it will be noted that, as all the above books were charged to, and paid for by, the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, we are naturally led to the inference that the Constitutions were sent by that body to the Lodges outside of Philadelphia which had been set up in Massachusetts, Carolina, and Pennsylvania, and were either within its Jurisdiction or at least subordinate to that Right Worshipful Body.

How the Boston and Carolina Lodges distributed the copies sent them by the Pennsylvania Lodge, we at this time have no means of knowing. Whether they were sold or furnished to the individual Brethren is an open

question. In the journal part of the old account-book we find two separate entries where Brother FRANKLIN sends, upon his own account, a consignment of Mason Books to both of the above colonies. A fac-simile of both entries is appended. (See pages 15 and 16.)

First, we have one to LOUIS TIMOTHEE, at Charleston, South Carolina. TIMOTHEE was formerly of Philadelphia, and, together with FRANKLIN, June 11, 1732, published the *Philadelphische Zeitung*, the first German newspaper in America. He afterwards went to Charleston, to take charge of the printing-office which was established there in 1731, by Brother THOMAS WHITEMARSH, of St. John's Lodge, who had been equipped with a printer's outfit and sent out by FRANKLIN. It is to Brother WHITEMARSH that we may directly trace the introduction of Freemasonry into South Carolina.

The next entry is for a consignment to his brother JAMES FRANKLIN, at Boston. FRANKLIN notes that they were sent by his brother PETER.

These entries may possibly help to explain the post-script in the Franklin letter to Brother HENRY PRICE, of Boston, dated November 28, 1734, mention of which has already been made by Brother MACCALLA, wherein the Philadelphia Mason-printer states,—

“If more of the Constitutions are wanted among you, please hint it to me.”

In other words, FRANKLIN was selling to both the Grand Lodge and to individual members.

Aug. ✓	✓	Mr. Gwynn's Paper	
	✓	Mr. Brumiel's Paper: 50 Books	1.
	✓	Capt. Watson's Paper & Books	2.
	✓	Sent by Mr. J. Timothy by Robert Stevenson 50 Jackson's Brady's Books 6 Marion Books 100 Jackson's 200 Books No. 17 & 18 200 Books	

ACCOUNT OF BOOKS SENT BY FRANKLIN TO LOUIS PHOENIX AT CHARLESTON, S. C., AUGUST, 1734.

Sent to Broth James by Brooker Peter			
100 Catechisms	1.	5.	
8 Mapon Books		15.	
40 Bible & Trudy's Psalm	3.		
40 w' Pasteboard	9.	1.	8
		6.	8
		6.	8

ENTRY OF BOOKS SENT BY FRANKLIN TO BOSTON, AUGUST, 1734.

That the Constitutions charged by FRANKLIN to the "Lodge of Masons," as appears in his "Ledger A," were not for gratuitous distribution among the individual members in Pennsylvania, is proved by various entries scattered through the old journal, showing how copies were charged to individual accounts. I will give a few as an illustration.

My first illustration appears upon the ledger page directly above the Masonic account, where Brother ISAAC BROWN is charged—

" For a gilt Mason book & one unb ^d	7 6"
--	------

Upon other pages we find,—

" October 8, 1734 Philip Syng Dr. for binding a mason book	1 6
November, 1734 Mr. Thomas Penn Proprietor For a book of Constitutions	6
James Bingham for Binding a mason book	1 6
Mr. Newingham for binding a Mason book gilt	4
Edward Evans for a Mason book	2 6
March 20, 1735 John Hubbard for Mason Book	2 6"

All of the above, with the exception of THOMAS PENN and EDWARD EVANS, were members of St. John's Lodge in Philadelphia.

Then, again, an examination of the ledger of St. John's Lodge, "Liber B," shows that there was no mention whatever of any of these accounts or items in the records of this Lodge. In addition, other items or charges appear in "Liber B" for books bought of

FRANKLIN, who was a member of that Lodge, but they do not appear in the above journal or ledger account. This conclusively proves the fact that St. John's Lodge of Philadelphia was a Subordinate Lodge, and not the "Grand" Lodge, as has been wrongly claimed. They were two distinct and separate organizations. This is an important piece of evidence, as it shows absolutely the existence during the early period of 1731-1734 of not only more than one Lodge in the city of Philadelphia, but of another Lodge in Lancaster, whereof we heretofore had no knowledge whatever. To this Lodge the Constitutions were sent, and were charged by FRANKLIN to the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, evidently in the same manner and purpose as the others that were sent to Massachusetts and South Carolina.

Assuming the above argument to be correct, it fully bears out the before-mentioned notice published by FRANKLIN in his *Pennsylvania Gazette*, under date of December 3 to 8, 1730, wherein he mentions that,—

All there are several Lodges of FREE-MASONS erected in this Province, and People have lately been much amused with Conjectures concerning them; we think the following Account of Free-Masonry from London, will not be unacceptable to our Readers.

I call your special attention to FRANKLIN's statement that *several* Lodges had been erected within *this* Province. Franklin, who was an exceedingly careful journalist, would hardly have exaggerated the number

of Lodges within *this* Province if they had not existed. This issue of the *Gazette* has another feature of interest to the Masonic student and historian, as it contains the first alleged disclosure of the Mysteries of Freemasonry made in America.

I have placed a copy of this paper with the Library Committee. After a notice referring to the several Lodges within the Province, there is printed an introduction purporting to have been received from London. It sets forth :

LONDON, August 12.

BY the Death of a Gentleman who was one of the Brotherhood of FREE-MASONS, there has lately happen'd a Discovery of abundance of their secret Signs and Wonders, with the mysterious Manner of their Admission into that Fraternity. The following is a true Copy of a Manuscript which the Deceased had written for the Benefit of his own private Remembrance, and which was found conceal'd among his choicest Papers in the most hidden Part of his Cabinet. The World has long admir'd, that in such a numerous Company, many of them not remarkable for Taciturnity, there has been no one found, that in his Cups, or in any other Circumstance, would discover their Mysteries :

* * * * *
 * * * * *
 * * * * *

We shall not use many Words to persuade the Publick that the following Piece is genuine; it carries all the Marks of Truth in itself: We would only refer the Reader to the Conduct of the Brotherhood upon this Occasion; if they *ridicule* it, or look *very grave* upon it, or if they are *very angry* and endeavour to *decri* it, he may be satisfied it is the *real Truth*.

Certain ear-marks prove this to have been written by the same hand that penned "Poor Richard's Almanac."

Numb. 108.

The Pennsylvania Gazette.

Containing the freshest Advices Foreign and Domestic.

20

From Thursday, December 3 to Tuesday, December 8. 1730.

As there are several Lodges of F R E E - M A S O N S erected in this Province, and People have lately been much amused with Conjectures concerning them, we think the following Account of Free-Masonry from London, will not be unacceptable to our Readers.

HEADING OF FRANKLIN'S PAPER CONTAINING AN EXTENDED NOTICE OF THE MASONIC FRATERNITY. COPY IN LIBRARY OF GRAND LODGE OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Then follows what FRANKLIN calls the "Mystery of Free-Masonry." It must be borne in mind that at the time of this publication BENJAMIN FRANKLIN was not yet a Mason. It was not until February of the following year (1731) that he was admitted within the tyled portals of a regularly constituted Lodge, as appears from the celebrated "Liber B."

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, after he was made a Mason, evidently felt some pangs of conscience respecting the publication of his ridiculous "Mystery," and, as a partial reparation, he printed in *Gazette* No. 130, May 6 to May 13, from Chambers's great Universal Dictionary of all Arts and Sciences, an extract concerning the Free and Accepted Masons.

In conclusion, I will but say that it has been to me a great pleasure and satisfaction to have discovered the additional original testimony regarding the antiquity of the first Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. But greatest of all is the feeling that, in presenting the Communication to this Right Worshipful Body, the new facts set forth go far to confirm, as it were, the plea so ably made by our late Brother CLIFFORD P. MACCALLA for Philadelphia as the "MOTHER CITY OF FREEMASONRY IN AMERICA."

